

Report of the District Superintendent

Conference Year 2010-2011 North Carolina West District The Wesleyan Church

As the crow flies, it is just over 225 miles from the Cornerstone church to the Peeles Chapel church. It is almost 140 miles from the Christ Loves You Church in Mount Airy (Cristo te Ama), to the Bennetsville Church. In those 31,500 square miles, 10,719 people identify themselves as members of a Wesleyan Church in the North Carolina West District. Those people are charged with doing their part to assist us in spreading the Gospel and the message of Hope and Holiness to our region.

That message is shared in many different ways. It is shared in worship services that cover the entire spectrum of traditional and contemporary styles. It is discussed in small groups. It is carried by acts of kindness into our communities. It is empowered by prayer meetings of two or three or entire congregations. It is blessing our newest residents in Hispanic churches and our longest dwelling residents in Native American communities.

General Superintendent Armiger, fellow ministers, and lay delegates of the North Carolina West District. I greet you and welcome you to our gathering to review how God has worked among s these past twelve months. It is important for us to remember that we are His partners in ministry.

I am indebted to the many people who sacrificially serve in order to make sure that our District continues to operate efficiently. It has been a blessing to have Rev. Todd Reynolds serve along side me this year. He continues to provide valuable leadership in several key areas. His work in leading Refocusing efforts for local churches is key to our future. Rev. Scott Howard and Larry French have joined us to serve as the Executive Committee and their expertise has been key in providing valuable leadership for the District. Nancy Mills has joined our Office Staff and has become a great help as we coordinate District ministries and consolidate some tasks into a central location. I also wish to express appreciation to Cathy Williams for her many years of faithful service to the district. In addition, there are numbers of people who serve on boards and committees that keep the district running smoothly. Please know that their efforts make a significant difference in what we are able to accomplish. I also deeply appreciate my wife and her ministry to the district, especially to our Pastor's wives.

VISION 2020

5,000 NEW BAPTISMS BY 2020

This was easily our most ambitious goal. Our average baptisms for the last 10 years was 284. This year, we baptized 356. We are emphasizing Baptism because it keeps us accountable to follow up on and disciple those who have made a commitment to Christ. Nothing adds to the life and the spirit of a church like seeing new believers claim Christ as their Savior and identify with Him through Baptism. This is the only area in our Vision 2020 where we are not on pace or ahead of pace for the goals set before us.

There is only one way we will be able to realize this goal. We must commit ourselves to accomplishing it together. Forty-seven of our churches went through an entire conference year without anyone being baptized in one of their services. Less than half of those saved through church ministries were baptized.

We need a renewed commitment to this sacrament. We need to realize that if a church goes an entire year, holding regular services and preaching the Gospel, and no one is baptized, then something is wrong. If you are a Pastor or delegate from one of those churches, would you consider committing some extra time of prayer in order to see a service of baptism in your church? It is more than being able to make a claim on a report, it is determining to renew the joy and excitement that always accompanies these confession of the identifying with a new life in Christ.

10 NEW CHURCH PLANTS BY 2020

We were able to get a strong start on planting new churches. One February 6, two new missions started on the same morning. In Winston-Salem, Pastor Nestor Gudino and his core group launched “La Roca”. They have advertised the church as “Una Iglesia Diferente” and are specifically targeting younger, second generation immigrants. They are off to a very strong start. The same Sunday, Pastor Jay DePoy and his core team launched, “Exodus Asheville”. Their first service featured a very strong representation of the younger generations.

In September, we will join the North Carolina East district in a joint church plant in Wallburg. Pastor Scott Newton and Pastor Ken Klein will be co-pastors of this new venture. While the official launch of the church is twelve weeks away, they have already held preview services with nearly 250 in attendance.

Even though the District has overseen the planting of these new congregations, it must be noted that the most effective new churches are started by other churches. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for a church to plant a daughter church. I do believe that we have a great platform for launching new churches or creating new points of entry. Our district now has seven area revivals, tremendous examples of cooperation between congregations. I challenge you to begin to pray as to how God could lead those areas to start new churches or new points of entry within the spirit of cooperation already forged and building in each area.

50 NEW “POINTS OF ENTRY” BY 2020

Last year, we had already laid the groundwork for new entry points and many of those ministries continue to flourish. In addition, we have seen other new points of entry created this year.

The Greenwood Hills Church began a new worship service in September. The service was created to reach a younger generation and the results have been outstanding! The “Freedom” service has consistently had an attendance of 100 or better and the established service continues to meet as well. It has allowed the church to maximize their facilities and reach a new group of believers.

Dallas Wesleyan began a series of services know as “New Life Saturday Night”. They have featured guest speakers from across the district as well as guest musicians. The attendance has been very strong and the service has been able to reach people that were not attending the traditional Sunday Morning service.

Hendersonville, First began an outreach in a local park. These events have seen good attendance and have built a bridge to bring new people into the church and into the Kingdom They also offered a Youth Rally during the summer that saw several youth saved.

Brevard also added a new service. Their older generation should be cheered for their willingness to sacrificially move to the early service on Sundays. “The Well” features music and teaching that builds on deep commitments. “The Bridge” is their service designed to reach the younger generation and draw them into the church.

Pastor David Johnson and the Old Fort church established a tent revival to reach out and to build valuable relationships in their community. Attendance began at 52, but grew to 177 on the final night. People heard the Gospel and responded and valuable relationships were built within the community.

One particularly interesting point of victory is what is happening on the campus of the New Life Wesleyan Church in Winston-Salem. Each Sunday, three separate congregations hold services in this facility. The spirit of hospitality shown by the New Life church has allowed two fledgling congregations to “get on their feet” without the high costs of rent, utilities, and maintenance for their own facility. Who would have dreamed that three congregations of three different ethnic backgrounds could share one building and see ministry flourish? How many of our other churches could be gracious hosts and allow a new ministry to start within their walls?

These five efforts put us on target for our fifty new “Points of Entry”. There are others that will soon launch or have been shared in other forums. To be honest, it would be much easier for your church to keep doing things the way you have been doing. Opening new doors of ministry creates all kinds of issues. Extra volunteers must be recruited. Those who value routine struggle with the changes. It’s just easier to keep on doing things the way we always have. I would challenge you to do one thing. Please take note of the churches that are mentioned that have caught the “Vision 2020”. It is not a coincidence that they are leading the way in many areas of growth, outreach, and renewal.

100 NEW PASTORS ENTERING THE COURSE OF STUDY BY 2020

We continue to have a need for Pastors who sense and follow God's call into the ministry. Our goal was to see 100 new ministerial students within the next ten years. It is my privilege to report to you that we have seen 14 new students added this year. Nine of them have already taken a class in the course of study or at college and the others should begin their training soon.

It is important that your church make this an object of prayer. We are beginning to identify "sending" churches across the District, and they all have made the calling and support of ministers an item of prayer. It is refreshing to see it on prayer lists and to hear called out in prayer the need or the names of those who have already answered. The NC West District has been built by men and women faithfully answering God's call upon their lives. I believe that this will be an area we look back on and see God's providential answer in the years to come.

KEEPING DOLLARS AT HOME . . . GIVING MORE AWAY

It is our plan to lower district Budget Assessment to at least 10% by the year 2020. (The assessment is currently at 10.25%. The district receives 4.25% and the other 6% goes to denominational needs). We believe that it is imperative to keep as much money as possible at the local church level. We will continue to cut our costs as our income grows in order to reach this benchmark.

Please note the churches that have given 20% of their total income away (included in this report). They have managed to be generous in their giving and continue to effectively minister in their churches and communities. I believe that God will be sure to bless our congregations that are channels for His resources to are committed to meeting the needs in their communities..

SIGNATURE PROJECTS

Our goal is to complete 1,000 local "***Signature Projects***" by the 2020 District Conference. It has been exciting to hear the reports from all across the district! Churches are serving in homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and especially reaching out to local schools. The one constant in the reports is that our people are finding great joy in serving. The purpose of our outreach is not to sharpen our skills in the social gospel, but to build bridges to our community and reshape the image of our churches as being focused on the needs of our communities as well as the needs of our own members. Take great care to keep the momentum going. It will take your church several events to raise awareness in your community and continued events to convince people it is your identity rather than a phase that the church is going through.

We have had some difficulty in tracking the progress and number of these events, but soon after conference will ask for a report covering last year and the Quarterly Pastors report for the coming year will have a place to share what God is doing through your church to bless your community.

Notes from the Past Conference Year

- Last year, 35 of our churches grew in Morning Worship attendance. This year, that number rose to 40.
- We have one church that has grown for five consecutive years; Christ Loves You in Mt. Airy. Bessemer City First has grown four years in a row. Five churches have grown for three consecutive years; Bethel (Kannapolis), Beulah Heights, Dallas, Emmanuel (Lexington), and Long Shoals. Eleven churches have grown for two consecutive years; Bennettsville, Charlotte First, Hickory Chapel, McAdenville, Memorial Park, Mount Airy, Old Fort, Providence, Taylorsville, United, and Throne of Grace (Light to the Nations).
- We were able to finish another year "in the black". This is remarkable in light of the bleak economy and several thousand dollars of unbudgeted expenses.
- Congratulations to Kannapolis, First for marking One Hundred years in ministry. The church held several commemorative events to mark this occasion.

CHURCHES OF EXCELLENCE

BAPTISMS

The following churches did an outstanding job of baptizing believers:

Hendersonville, First - 25 Baptized
Jamestown, Bales - 15 Baptized
Kings Mountain, First - 15 Baptized
Christ Loves You - 14 Baptized
Bessemer City, First - 13 Baptized
Crossroads - 13 Baptized
Kannapolis, First - 13 Baptized
Greenwood Hills - 12 Baptized
McAdenville - 12 Baptized
Shady Grove - 12 Baptized

GROWTH

The following churches led the district with growth in Morning Worship attendance:

Jamestown, Bales - Gain of 49
Greenwood Hills - Gain of 44
First Haitian - Gain of 38
Hendersonville, First - Gain of 23
Charlotte, First - Gain of 22
Rain Hill - Gain of 20
Mt. Airy - Gain of 16
Throne of Grace - Gain of 15
Bethel, Flat Rock - Gain of 13
Christ Loves You - Gain of 13
McAdenville - Gain of 13

GENEROSITY

The following churches led the district with giving outside their four walls:

<u>Percentage Giving</u>		<u>Total Funds Given</u>	
Qualla	51%	Brevard	\$66,004
Peeles Chapel	25%	Hayworth	\$48,492
Brevard	23%	Bess. City	\$44,389
Nebo	23%	Kings Mtn. First	\$35,527
McAdenville	22%	Shady Grove	\$33,431
Faith	22%	McAdenville	\$32,553
Old Fort	21%	Gastonia, First	\$31,268
Rock Hill	20%	Liberty, Summerfield	\$24,448
Bess. City, First	20%	Christ	\$22,164
Kings Mtn., First	20%	Sandy Ridge	\$20,993
Mt. Hebron	20%		